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TAGS: [ASEC](#) [PTER](#) [IZ](#)

SUBJECT: RSO MEETING WITH KRG ZEREVANI COMMANDER

Classified By: RSO Mark Hipp; Reason 1.4 (d) and (g)

11. (SBU) Summary: On 03/19/2009, the RSO met with the Commanding General of the Zerevani (Peshmerga), Major General Aziz Wayse, to extend courtesies and discuss further specifics regarding Antiterrorism Assistance Training and the integration of Zerevani forces into RSO's protective security operation in the Kurdistan Regional Government areas. General Wayse welcomed the visit, emphasizing that he and his command would continue to provide assistance to the official American community whenever needed. The RSO thanked the General for his consideration and valuable assistance to date. End Summary.

12. (SBU) On 03/19/2009, the RSO met with the Commanding General of the Zerevani (Peshmerga), Major General Aziz Wayse, to extend courtesies and discuss further specifics regarding Antiterrorism Assistance Training and the integration of Zerevani forces into RSO's protective security operation in the Kurdistan Regional Government areas. The meeting took place at the Zerevani training camp located outside of Erbil. Prior to the meeting, RSO and General Wayse briefly toured the parade ground where hundreds of new Zerevani recruits were drilling. The RSO and the General then proceeded to the range area to jointly observe the first Zerevani class undergoing their second day of firearms training for the integration initiative. The RSO and General then proceeded to the meeting location to conduct business.

13. (C/NF) The RSO thanked the General for his continued support of our operations. The RSO remarked that he had heard good reports about the Zerevani training candidates and was please to be able to observe the training first-hand. The General responded positively, indicating that he was willing to provide all the resources at his disposal to make the initiative a success. The RSO explained to General Wayse that a main purpose of his visit was to inform the General of a serious issue regarding the approach of Zerevani integration candidates by the Asyesh (General Security) to report on RRT activities. The RSO reiterated that this kind of activity places the entire integration initiative and continued Antiterrorism Assistance Program in jeopardy. The General disavowed any knowledge of activity and promised the RSO that he would investigate the matter. General Wayse assured the RSO that the Zerevani were not involved in any such activity, were proud to be assisting in the protection of the RRT, and would not condone reporting on RRT activities. The RSO again thanked the General for the Zerevani support in Dohuk that has now enabled the RRT to increase travel and engagement efforts through their support of our overnight and regional outreach there.

14. (S/NF) General Wayse took advantage of the RSO's visit to opine that relations between the KRG and the central government in Baghdad were not entirely good. He outlined difficulties encountered in terms of securing central government resources, stating that Iraqi Ministry of Interior and Defense personnel receive the equivalent of \$500 U.S. dollars and his Zerevani receive approximately \$220 U.S. dollars. He believes the Zerevani are

underfunded because they are made up of ethnic Kurds. The General also delineated Kurdish concerns regarding their autonomy and perceived Iraqi central government moves to curtail freedoms and rights currently enjoyed by the Kurds within the KRG. The General offered an assurance that he hoped a peaceful solution could be brokered between, President Talibani, Prime Minister Maliki, and KRG Prime Minister Barzani over elections and autonomy. The RSO QMinister Barzani over elections and autonomy. The RSO urged the General to work to resolve their differences peaceably through the governmental and political process.

15. (SBU) The RSO conveyed his appreciation to General Wayse for his continued support of the integration and Antiterrorism Assistance initiatives. Post will keep the Department apprised of any pertinent developments with regards to host country security assistance and response.

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